

**Minutes**  
**Delaware Council of Faith-Based Partnerships (DCFBP)**  
**Tuesday, February 4, 2014**  
**1-3 pm**  
**Smyrna Public Library**  
**107 South Main St.**  
**Smyrna, DE, 19977**

**Attendees:** Douglas D.Gerds (Chair), Flora McConkie, Jeanne Cashman, Max Joseph Wolf, Raina Harper Allen, Kenny Foster, Usman Sandhu.

**Guest:** Jennifer Hill, **Constituent Relations Director, Office of the Governor.**

The meeting was called to order by Doug at approx. 1:15pm.

**Introduction of Jen Hill to Council and introduction of each Council member.** Following last month's Council presentation at the Governor's Cabinet Meeting, Jen offered to be a liaison to the Council. She looks forward to assisting the Council in connecting with state agencies. Her background includes extensive non-profit leadership, with economically and culturally diverse groups. Jen plans to regularly attend monthly Council meetings, and Council meetings with state agencies.

The Council also took a few moments for a personal update from each member.

**Minutes of December 10, 2013 meeting approved.**

**Report on meeting with Governor and Cabinet on January 10, 2014.** Two-page report distributed to those in attendance (approx.30 people) is attached. Doug and Flora represented Council. Doug presented an overview of Council.

Reception was enthusiastic, with particular interest from the following:

**Commissioner Robert Coupe of the Department of Correction** on re-entry/recidivism.

**Secretary Rita Landgraf of the Department of Health and Social Services** around issues of homelessness and weather related threats to health and well-being.

**Director Anas Ben Addi of the Delaware State Housing Authority** on problems relating to foreclosures, mortgages, tax incentives and how to get credible information to citizens of DE via their faith community/house of worship.

**Major General Frank Vavala of the Delaware National Guard** on faith communities supporting those serving in the military and their families.

Governor Markell seemed pleased with the Council's report and the reaction of his key personnel. Meeting provided Council with renewed enthusiasm and excitement in moving forward and in particular, partnering with state agencies.

**Update on Nemours Grant.** John provided report via email. United Way is moving forward on the grant. Large-scale events planned for the March and May. Council discussed and determined to take the grant project “off our agenda,” and to return to our four areas of focus, with a more strategic approach. Concern expressed regarding coordinating with other organizations on grants.

**Update on potential United Way partnership.** Via email, Michael provided a detailed report on his recent meeting with Michelle Taylor, Executive Director, United Way of Delaware. They discussed the possibility of United Way providing office space for the Council. Possibility of various partnerships and potential for increased visibility discussed. Michelle is pleased that Governor Markell initiated the Council as a state-wide interfaith organization and recognizes the need for United Way to have more interfaith partnerships in their work.

With the approval of their Executive Board, United Way of Delaware is offering Council office space at no cost, and the opportunity to regularly interface with United Way on potential partnerships. Michael (via email) and Raina proposed accepting United Way’s offer. Council discussed concerns regarding need for autonomy, but also need for support in moving forward and possibility of incubating at United Way. Memorandum of understanding discussed.

Council members expressed concerns regarding: use of Council’s name; importance of taking time to consider options; developing and maintaining our identity; perception of others; not being too closely aligned with any organization or focused on a specific non-profit.

Jen suggested reviewing the following when considering new programs/opportunities: available money and resources; capacity of organization; job description.

After extensive discussion, Council decided to graciously decline the United Way offer, but to consider opportunities to partner with United Way for specific projects in support of our four areas of focus. Doug to meet with Michelle and Michael to discuss.

**For future consideration:** United Way seeks involvement from faith communities for SPaRC, Success Plans and Roads to Careers. The program is a partnership between business community, educational system, and community service organizations. Beginning with high school students, SPaRC aims to transition student plans into career opportunities with local businesses through internships, summer jobs, job shadowing and e-mentors. (At a recent meeting about SPaRC, faith communities were not represented.)

**Update on partnership with Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA).** Flora met with Bob George and Marny McLee, of DEMA, to begin planning emergency preparedness/response event for faith leaders. Initial agenda includes: welcome by Doug and DEMA; overview and tour of DEMA; overview of Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) and Citizen Corp; preparing houses of worship for emergencies; preparing individuals and families; process for houses of worship as shelters/aid facilities; overview of Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD); networking and introduction of attendees; Q&A. Date to be determined. DEMA will host and arrange for presenters. Council will handle most of

the publicity and registration. Limit of approx. 30 participants. Raina to work with Flora on publicity. Council to provide light refreshments.

**Discussion regarding funding.** Usman expressed desire to offer \$4000 donation to Council. Jen to check with Governor's Office regarding (including legal issues that may need to be addressed, setting up budget and accounting systems). Flora to begin tracking monthly expenses – which currently include paper and ink for agendas, minutes and reports -- and have thus far been funded by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Other handouts have been provided by various Council members and/or their houses of worship.

**Subcommittee on Incarceration, Re-Entry and Recidivism (Kenny, Max, Jeanne) asked to prepare for upcoming meeting with Department of Correction.** Issues to consider include access, conditions, re-entry, education/training, etc. Council should ask, "What can we bring to you?"

**New business.** Raina introduced the Council to the California-based non-profit "Vision to Learn," which provides free eye exams and free eyeglasses to elementary school students in low-income communities. Program may come to Delaware this year.

**Next meeting.** Tuesday, March 4, 2014, 1-3 pm. (Location TBA.)

Meeting adjourned at approx. 3:05 pm.

Submitted by Flora McConkie, DCFBP Secretary, March 4, 2014.

**Report for Governor Jack Markell and Lt. Governor Matt Denn  
and The Governor's Cabinet  
Delaware Council of Faith-Based Partnerships**

Presented Friday, January 10, 2014

**Created by Executive Order January 2012**

Ten members appointed. First meeting June 2012. Fifteen meetings in eighteen months, at various houses of worship. Officers elected. By-laws created.

Council members serve as volunteers. The Council currently operates without funding.

**Four Areas of Focus Selected**

Emergency Preparedness and Response

After School and Summer Programs for Youth

Foster Care and Transitioning for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care

Incarceration, Re-Entry and Recidivism

**Duties and Functions of the Council**

Develop partnerships between faith-based groups and executive branch agencies; promote volunteerism and community service; provide forum for exchange of ideas on improving delivery and efficiency of services in community; encourage innovation and share best practices.

**Council Accomplishments**

Active support of the Lt. Governor's *Faith, Family and Foster Care* initiative.

Database of Delaware faith-based institutions created and used to survey faith leaders on the State's public health emergency preparedness, in cooperation with Division of Public Health and University of Delaware's Center for Community Research and Service.

Partnering with Delaware State Parks and Mormon Helping Hands for *Saturday in the Park: A Day of Service*, during State's April 2013 Week of Service.

**Current Initiatives**

Providing direction for a \$20,000 Nemours Community Transformation Grant to connect faith communities and public schools in educating children on healthy food choices.

Partnering with Delaware Emergency Management Agency for an emergency preparedness and response workshop for faith leaders, to be held later this year.

## **Delaware Council of Faith-Based Partnerships**

### **Current Council members:**

**The Reverend Dr. Douglas D. Gerdts, Council Chair**

First & Central Presbyterian Church, Wilmington

**Rabbi Michael Scott Beals, Council Vice-Chair**

Congregation Beth Shalom, Wilmington

**Flora McConkie, Council Secretary**

Relief Society, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Wilmington

**Raina Harper Allen**

Formerly Director of Community Engagement, Office of Lt. Governor, Wilmington

**Sister Jeanne Frances Cashman OSU**

Ursuline Convent, Wilmington

**Reverend Kenneth L. Foster**

Grace Church (PCA), Dover

**Reverend John G. Moore Sr.**

Vice President, Resource Development, United Way of Delaware, Magnolia

**Usman Z. Sandhu**

Islamic Society of Central Delaware, Dover

**The Reverend Max Joseph Wolf**

All Saints' Episcopal Church & St. George's Chapel, Rehoboth Beach

### **Former Council members:**

**The Reverend Dr. Anastacio A. Matamoros**

Church of God of Prophecy, Greenwood

**Pastor Kimberly Mark Tephabock**

Dagsboro Church of God, Dagsboro

**The Delaware Council of Faith-Based Partnerships is on the State of Delaware website:**

**<http://www.delaware.gov/boardsandcommissions/dcfbp/>**

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